

## Homeland Security Update...



Homeland Security Chairman Christopher Cox  
<http://homeland.house.gov>

## MAKING AMERICA MORE SAFE AND SECURE *Successes at Home in the War on Terror*

*The Department of Homeland Security first opened its doors a little over a year ago, and in this short time, the U.S. Congress and the Bush Administration have made tremendous progress to secure our Nation. Here are a few highlights of our major homeland security accomplishments:*

### **COMBATING BIOTERRORISM**

#### **Project BioShield**

- Project BioShield – a key initiative in bolstering our Nation’s bioterror defense – will ensure that resources are available to pay for "next-generation" medical countermeasures. The bill will provide incentives for biotech companies to develop treatments against agents of attack, such as anthrax and smallpox, by allowing the government to invest \$5.6 billion over ten years largely to procure improved vaccines or drugs.
- *The House and Senate have passed Project BioShield.*

#### **Biodefense for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

- President Bush has approved a new directive – *Biodefense for the 21st Century* -- to build our ability to thwart bioterror attacks. Specifically, the President’s plan calls for the creation of a common surveillance system to collect and analyze information about bioterror attacks, as well as a national risk assessment every two years on emerging biological threats.



#### **BioWatch**

- A Department of Homeland Security (DHS) program that monitors the air over major cities employing environment sampling/detection devices to quickly detect terrorist agents in time to distribute life-saving countermeasures to citizens.

# **SECURING OUR BORDER AND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**

## **Airline Security**

### **US-VISIT**

- A biometric-based system that tracks non-immigrant visa holders visiting the U.S. The program adds a layer of protection to our border security system, while facilitating the legitimate trade and travel that are hallmarks of our free society. It only takes 15 seconds to screen each visitor and over 200 people to-date have been caught with prior or suspected criminal or immigration violations.

#### **AIRLINE SECURITY STATS:**

- ✓ There are 40,000 passenger screeners at 429 commercial airports.
- ✓ More than 20,000 baggage screeners.
- ✓ Roughly 90 percent of all checked baggage go through explosives detection systems or explosives trace detection equipment.
- ✓ More than 4.8 million prohibited items have been confiscated (including firearms, knives, and incendiary or flammable objects) from airline passengers.

#### **Federal Flight Deck Officer Program (FFDO)**

- In July 2003, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) launched a training program for commercial airline pilots who volunteer to serve as federal law enforcement officers responsible for defending the cockpit against terrorist attacks.
- FFDO candidates receive intensive training, including firearms instruction.

#### **CAPPS II**

- The Computer Assisted Passenger Prescreening System II program, being developed and tested

by TSA, will authenticate airline passengers' identities and perform risk assessments to detect individuals who may pose a terrorist-related threat or who have outstanding Federal or state warrants for crimes of violence.

## **Seaport Security**

### **Container Security Initiative (CSI)**

- About 90 percent of all world cargo moves by container. Nearly 7 million cargo containers are offloaded at U.S. ports each year.
- CSI is an initiative U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) initiative to protect the global trading system and the trade lanes between CSI ports and the United States. Under the CSI program, a team of CBP officers is deployed to work with host nation counterparts to target all containers that pose a potential threat to our Nation.

### **The Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA)**

- MTSA requires security assessments and plans for all ports, vessels, and facilities on or near U.S. waterways. Every major port in the country now has a terrorism vulnerability assessment. Since September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard has interdicted over 14,000 individuals attempting to enter the United States illegally, and created and maintained more than 90 Maritime Security Zones.
- The President signed MTSA into law in 2002.



## **PROTECTING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC)**

- HSOC is a 24/7 operation that is responsible for collecting and fusing law enforcement and intelligence information on a daily basis to help prevent, detect, and respond to terrorist incidents. This center serves as the national hub for operational communications and information sharing in the event of a domestic terrorist attack.



### **Chemical Plants**

- The Department of Homeland Security has conducted a national risk analysis of the chemical sector to identify the highest-risk sites.
- DHS also has deployed protective security counterterrorism specialists to top priority chemical sites to identify vulnerabilities and develop prevention strategies with site management and local officials. In addition to this, DHS has completed vulnerability assessments, developed specific buffer zone security plans in consultation with site management and local law enforcement, and begun protective training programs at close to two dozen of the highest-risk sites in the nation.

## **SUPPORTING OUR FIRST RESPONDERS**

### **Project SAFECOM**

- This DHS initiative is dedicated to improving public safety response through enhanced interoperable wireless communications.
- On April 26, 2004, DHS' Science and Technology Directorate released the first document providing base level interoperability requirements for public safety communications systems. This "Statement of Requirements" marks the first time that public safety agencies have received a document outlining interoperability communications requirements.

### **H.R. 3266 – The Faster and Smarter Funding for First Responders Act**

- H.R. 3266 cuts the red tape to make the funding system for first responders risk-based so that grant money goes to where it is most needed more quickly.
- The bill passed the Homeland Security Committee by vote of **37-0** in March 2004.
- It should be ready for floor action in June.

